

REMARKS

Status Of Application

Claims 1-21 are pending in the application; the status of the claims is as follows:

Claims 6-18, and 20 are objected to because of informalities.

Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1, 3-5, 19, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,115,262 to Komiya ("Komiya").

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Komiya in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,077,613 to Hirao et al. ("Hirao").

Claims 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 18, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Komiya in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,636,262 B1 to Okajima et al. ("Okajima").

Claims 8, 9, and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Komiya in view of Okajima, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,610,654 to Parulski et al ("Parulski").

Claims 14-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Komiya in view of Okajima, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,686,966 B1 to Hashimoto ("Hashimoto").

Claim Amendments

Claims 1, 19, and 21 have been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention.

Claims 6, 10, 11, 13, and 20 have been amended to improve the form thereof. The amendments are not related to the patentability of the claims over the prior art.

These amendments do not introduce any new matter.

Objections

It is respectfully submitted that the amendments to claims 6, 10, 11, and 20 overcome the objections to the subject claims.

35 U.S.C. § 112

It is respectfully submitted that the amendment to claim 20 moots the rejection thereof under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Prior Art Rejections

It is respectfully submitted that none of the prior art references, including Komiya, Hirao, Okajima, Parulski, and Hashimoto, disclose, teach, or otherwise suggest, an autofocus method, or camera using a method, in which a focusing lens is moved in steps that move the lens a first distance, greater than a distance corresponding to a depth of field, when the lens is not near the in-focus position, and a second distance, less than the first distance, when the lens is near the in-focus position.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1, 3-5, 19, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and the rejection of claims 2, 6-18, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Wherefore, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is considered to be in condition for allowance, and an early reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

This Amendment does not increase the number of independent claims, does not increase the total number of claims, and does not present any multiple dependency claims. Accordingly, no fee based on the number or type of claims is currently due. However, if a fee, other than the issue fee, is due, please charge this fee to Sidley Austin LLP Deposit Account No. 18-1260.


If an extension of time is required to enable this document to be timely filed and there is no separate Petition for Extension of Time filed herewith, this document is to be construed as also constituting a Petition for Extension of Time Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) for a period of time sufficient to enable this document to be timely filed.

Any other fee required for such Petition for Extension of Time and any other fee required by this document pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17, other than the issue fee,

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and not submitted herewith should be charged to Sidley Austin LLP Deposit Account No. 18-1260. Any refund should be credited to the same account.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 
Michael J. DeHaemer
Registration No. 39,164
Attorney for Applicant

MJD/llb:bar
SIDLEY AUSTIN LLP
717 N. Harwood, Suite 3400
Dallas, Texas 75201
Direct: (214) 981-3335
Main: (214) 981-3300
Facsimile: (214) 981-3400
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